

The President's Daily Brief

2 September 1969

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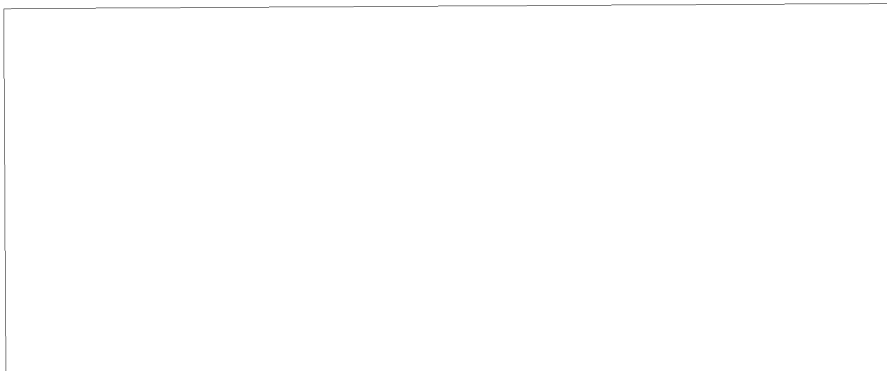
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LIBYA

The identity of the members of the Revolutionary Command Council is still a closely guarded secret. With the exception of former Lt. Col. Abu Shuwayrib, the self-proclaimed leader, none of them have been identified. The few spokesmen of the group who have dealt with US and other diplomats have all been young officers making an effort to convey good will.

The council seems to be firmly in control, perhaps because potential opposition was so clearly surprised. Recognition of the council by Egypt and Iraq lends authenticity to its claim to govern, and fear of Egyptian intervention may inhibit some future counter move.



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The council has asked that activities at Wheelus Air Base be reduced, but there is yet no indication of what long-term plans the new leaders might have, if any. The chargé in Tripoli has been told the council will respect all agreements with the oil companies and that there is no need for concern for any members of the foreign community. There have been no incidents thus far to create doubts as to the council's good intentions.

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ISRAEL-SYRIA

Israeli leaders are holding their anger in check while they wait for the US and other nations to obtain the release of the men still held by Syria. The Italian chargé in Damascus has been negotiating with the Syrians, but he is not optimistic about an early release. TWA officials are also in Damascus hoping to arrange freedom for the prisoners and to work out a plan for the repair and return of the aircraft.

The French Embassy in Damascus made a demarche, and Moscow complied with a US request to convey Washington's views to the Syrians. The Soviet deputy foreign minister told Ambassador Beam that the incident would "arrange itself" if the Israeli government used restraint.

BRAZIL

Transfer of the presidential powers to a military triumvirate has caused little adverse reaction thus far, either domestically or internationally. The civilian political leaders in Brazil who could have opposed the move have been effectively muzzled since December. The general public, unorganized and disenchanted, is not likely to detect any real difference and much less likely to protest.

If Costa e Silva is incapacitated for a prolonged period--and many Brazilians believe he will never return to office--senior officers will intensify their pushing

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and shoving to be in the best position possible when the presidential election comes up in January 1971. Military unity has been the key to such stability as Brazil has enjoyed. A prolonged dispute over the choice for the president's office could surface many partially hidden conflicts and jeopardize that unity.

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